

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

Right Honourable

T H E

Lord Mayor of London

And the Honourable the

Court of Aldermen,

A N D

G O V E R N O U R S

Of the several HOSPITALS of the City,

A T

St. Bridget's Church, on *Easter-Monday*, 1702.

B E I N G

One of the Anniversary Spittal-Sermons.

By the Right Reverend Father in God, JOHN,
Lord Bishop of *Litchfield* and *Coventry*.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Jacob Tonson*, within *Gray's-Inn-Gate*, next
Gray's-Inn-Lane, 1702.

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Right Honourable

Lord Mayor

And the Honorable

Court of Aldermen



St. Dunstons Church, East-End, 1707

One of the most

By the Right

Printed for

COLOSS. iii 1.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

THIS Epistle is an eminent Instance of St. Paul's indefatigable Pains to preserve the Faith ; and makes us sensible with how much reason it was, that he put the *care of all the Churches*, into the Catalogue of his Sufferings for the Cross of Christ. He had never seen these *Colossians* to whom he writes ; and therefore they could not properly be reckon'd to the number of his Converts ; (tho' *Epaphras* who preach'd the Gospel to 'em, was his Fellow-labourer, and perhaps his Disciple ;) but so soon as he heard they were in danger of being seduced by *False-Teachers*, he gives 'em to understand they were in the number of those within his Care ; and when those wicked Men endeavour'd to corrupt the sincerity of the Faith, under the specious Pretences of Humility and Discipline, to perswade them to address to God by the

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Mediation of Angels, because they were unworthy to approach the Divine Majesty themselves, and to continue in the observance of the *Mosaical* Legal Rites and other superstitious Ceremonies, as if in their own Nature they had some real efficiency : We see his Zeal is immediately rous'd, and he loses no time in asserting the Dignity and Liberty of the Gospel. He affirms the knowledge of Christ to be more excellent and divine, than the most sublime Speculations those boasters of Knowledge could arrive at : He shews it to be so perfect and compleat, that true Wisdom was consummated in it, without any other aid. He informs them, that Christ was infinitely superiour to the Angels, who were only his Servants to execute his Pleasure ; and that we being reconciled to God by Him, have immediate access to God in all our necessities ; and tells them, that having given up their Names to Christ, they were to follow Him alone ; and in the Method he had directed. In a moral Sense they had died, were buried, and had risen again in Christ ; and therefore he infers, they must endeavour to follow him in his Ascension too ; *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are Above.* To return to their former Practices, or to retain those mean and beggarly Rudiments which made up so great a part of their Religion, before they were converted to the

the Christian Faith, was to frustrate the end of it : That Faith carried their Eye still forward, and if they kept to the Integrity of it, would certainly conduct them to that place, *where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.*

The Text has little need of explication, for to *rise with Christ* is (as we find it explain'd in the sixth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the fourth Verse) *to walk in newness of life* ; or (as it is express'd in the 7th Chapter and the 6th Verse) *to serve God in newness of Spirit* ; for by Baptism we enter'd into a new Covenant, and oblig'd our selves to the observance of a new Religious Institution, which is spiritual and reasonable, and calls us to such a course of Thoughts and Actions as is agreeable thereunto. By *the things that are above*, are in general understood the Joys of Heaven, that *Life and Immortality which is brought to light through the Gospel*, those things which are only *spiritually discern'd*, and which nothing but a *reasonable Service* can entitle us to. And from the Text thus understood, we learn,

First, That the proper object of a Christian's pursuit, the things he ought to seek and labour for, are not to be found in this World. *They are Above.*

Secondly, That the true Christian Life will discover it self in the tendency of our Aims and Endeavours, Practices will be suitable to the Principles from whence they spring ; and therefore St. Paul expects it as a reasonable Evidence of a Christian's Sincerity, *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are Above.*

Thirdly, That the strongest Motive and greatest Encouragement to this Duty is, that the things we seek, not only are where Christ is, but where he is vested with all Power and Honour, *Where he sits at the right hand of God.*

And therefore I shall in the *Fourth* and *Last* place, instance in some Means whereby we may arrive at this End, and which are requisite to all such as sincerely *seek those things that are Above.*

I begin with the first, That the proper object of a Christian's pursuit, the things he ought to seek and labour for, are not to be found in this World. *They are Above.*

'Tis the excellency of the Christian Religion, that her Faith is the most sublime, and her Precepts the most reasonable : That both tend to the
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Perfection of our Natures, and both carry us to a compleat and adequate object of our desires. And for this reason it is, that a Christian is forced to get above the World, before he can come within the prospect of his Reward, for nothing in the World comes up to this Character. For, a compleat and perfect Object of Desire or Love, includes necessarily in it these two Qualifications. First, that it extend to the utmost stretch of our *Idea's* concerning it; and Secondly, that it have variety and always endure. It must first I say, be at least equal to the *Idea* we have conceiv'd of it, for otherwise we are cheated in the fruition, hopes and expectations are high rais'd, and sink at last in disappointment, and it must likewise yield variety and always endure, for otherwise satiety will grow upon us, the same things constantly cannot always please, the Mind is restless, and will not abide where it can no longer make new Discoveries; but when it has turn'd a thing on all sides, and seen through it, it presently flies off to a fresh Object. Apply we this now to Heaven and the World. *In the Presence of God* (i. e. in Heaven) *is fulness of Joy*, 'tis absolutely impossible to extend our imaginations so as fully to comprehend the smallest degrees of it: And *at his right Hand are Pleasures for evermore*: Pleasures fresh and ever flowing, a boundless

less store of Wisdom and Knowledge, where the active Mind shall find it self perpetually taken up in new Searches: Brighter Rays shall gradually spring in upon it, and the present satisfaction shall not hinder a constant Progress in Improvement and Pleasure. And what now like this can the World afford? What can it offer, that does not cheat and baffle our Expectations in the Pleasures it promis'd? Let the Appeal be to those who have had the most Experience, and they cannot but with Shame and Confusion own, that a weak reason and strong imagination give charms to the World, that are never to be found in it. How lifeless and insipid a thing is Grandeur, to those that have bin born to, or long enjoy'd it? And how sick oftentimes are they of that pageantry and glitter that dazles the Eyes of lookers on at a distance? They know and feel to be a burden, what others esteem their Happiness to consist in; and History affords many Examples of great Men, who have thrown it off as an intolerable Yoke, whilst the unexperienced about them have bin contending who should next get it on. But then suppose the World to be at present as agreeable as can be imagin'd, will it always continue? Or will it always be new? By no means: So much the contrary, that nothing in its own Nature is more uncertain

certain and fugitive. There must be a concurrence of many Circumstances, to make the World move easily with us ; but the least Wheel out of order, puts a full stop to the Machine ; an hundred things may obstruct our coming within the reach of what we aim at, and as many may prevent the enjoyment afterwards ; but if both succeed, yet it is certain they will come to an end, and generally speaking, to a very short one : For there wants that variety that should keep up the goust, the same thing over and over palls the Appetite, it grows into neglect, and at last becomes Nauseous. A short survey carries the Eye immediately over the whole Continent of Pleasure, where all the Treasure and Riches are carefully expos'd to view, and yet a miserable Sterility appears, and to an intelligent observer, a Soil so unpromising as utterly discourages the hopes of improvement or discovery. And this shews the Wisdom of the Christian's choice, who has judiciously fixt his heart *where true joys are to be found* : Who by frequent Meditation and Abstraction from the World, has learnt *to have his Conversation in Heaven, whilst he lives upon Earth*, and who labours with all imaginable Assiduity, to entitle himself to those Pleasures that shall never abate either in their relish or duration. He makes it the great business of his Life to strengthen his Faith,

Faith, and weaken his Appetites. By frequent and vigorous Reflections to go as far as he can into the scrutiny of a future Life, and get if possible a glimpse of those things *that eye hath not seen*. And by Moderation and Temperance, and a prudent self-denial to withdraw every day more and more from those low and despicable Enjoyments, which discover so much Poverty and Malignity in their Nature. And if he do not seriously and heartily do this, he takes up only a bare Name and a Profession, but is really neither *Dead* nor *Buried*, nor *Risen again with Christ*. For the true Christian life will discover it self in the tendency of our Aims and Endeavours, Practices will be suitable to the Principles from whence they spring, and therefore St. Paul expects it as a reasonable evidence of a Christian's Sincerity, *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are Above*.

This is my second Particular, and is so very obvious as scarce to admit of any thing by way of Proof and Confirmation. For if one that has too much already still drudges on for more; if he proceeds to add Land to Land, and Money to Money, to encrease an heap that is already overgrown, and in the mean time neglects to supply the necessities of his Neighbour, nay, perhaps his own just Occasions : Shall such an one persuade us *his Treasure*
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is in Heaven? We are better inform'd by seeing where *his Heart is*. If he really sought those things that are above, he would use these below after another manner; he would endeavour to *make to himself Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness*, by applying it to those ends for which God had given it, by decently supporting his Family and his Character, and liberally relieving the wants of other Men. So when we see a Man indulge himself in Luxury and Ease, and *make provision for the Flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof*, shall we think he has a relish for spiritual Things, or that his Thoughts are turn'd towards them? 'Tis impossible, it cannot be; for daily experience shews us, that whenever the Mind is in good earnest employ'd another way, the Body will grow into neglect of course. How many Instances have we known and heard of People, who in the pursuit of their Studies, and in eager application to Business, have even forgot the necessary refreshments of Food and Repose, and carried on their Labours to the impairing of their Strength? Much less could they attend to a Bill of Fare, or be solicitous what Provision was made for the Table, or in what manner it was prepar'd. As Thought is of the Essence of the Mind, (for it cannot be and not think,) so our Words and Actions will shew which way it is turn'd, *for out of the abundance of the Heart, the Mouth speaketh,*

and the Tree will certainly be discover'd by its Fruits ; and therefore vain and empty Pretensions are not only unprofitable, but foolish ; for as they do not recommend any one to God's Approbation, so neither can they impose upon a considering Man.

The *Colossians* were buried with Christ in Baptism, and in the same Sacrament they arose with him *through the Faith of the operation of God* (i. e.) by their immersion into Water, was figuratively signify'd a Death, a disclaiming, and renouncing of their former Lives, and their arising again out of the Water intimated, that they were risen to a new Life, to a Life of Faith, which should be wrought in them through the operation of the Blessed Spirit. They took a final leave not only of their Sins and Follies, but of their former Doctrines and Religious Usages, whereof some were plausible and specious in appearance, but had no real efficacy in themselves ; and they profess'd to lead a life for the future conformable to the Doctrine of Christ, and to the bright example he had set before their Eyes. This St. Paul tells 'em was the meaning of Baptism, and this was what they had undertaken ; but he is far from allowing that they had actually done it, on the other hand his Expostulations imply the contrary. If says he, *ye are dead with Christ to the Rudiments of the World, why as tho' living in the World are ye subject to Ordinances ?*

nances ? With what Face can ye pretend to a Religion, which admits of nothing but what tends to Edification, and yet at the same time continue in those Usages which contradict that Pretension ? and then a little below follow the Words of the Text, *if ye then be risen with Christ*, if ye still persist in the Profession, give proof of it, keep your Eye still upon Christ, and let the Cause produce its Effect ; for he repeats it again, *ye are Dead*, Dead to all your Trespases and Sins, if ye are really alive in Christ. And after a particular enumeration of almost the whole Catalogue of Vices and Passions, to which they were subject in their unregenerate State, he argues that it is impossible they should relapse into 'em again, if they were Faithful and Sincere.

I come now to my third Particular, that the strongest Motive, and greatest Encouragement to us to *seek those things that are above*, is : Not only that they are where Christ is, but where he is vested with all Power and Honour, *where he sits at the right Hand of God*. And that for these Reasons, because he is our Redeemer, our Mediator, makes amends for our Defects, by his own Merits, and shall at last be our Judge. And first, because he is our Redeemer : 'Tis no small inducement to a Man to do good Offices to any Person, to whom he remembers that he has bin kind before : Where we give Marks of our Esteem and Affection, the

very doing of it creates an encrease of 'em, and we cannot chuse but reflect, that the former benefits are thrown away and lost, if the good will be discontinu'd. And from hence we may conclude, how much our Saviour is concern'd in our Welfare, and with how much Assurance we may look for his Assistance, when we *seek those things that are Above*. For all that he has done and suffer'd for us, is lost, if he do not still continue to be our Benefactor; 'tis in vain, that he took human Nature upon him, spent his Life in a low and indigent condition, submitted to the Malice and Contradiction of Sinners, resign'd himself to a painful Death upon the Cross, went down into the Grave, rose again from the Dead, and ascended into Heaven to take possession of his Inheritance. 'Tis in vain I say, that he has done all this, if he does not still continue to us his Grace, and assist us in our Endeavours, to arrive at that happy Mansion which he has purchast and prepar'd for us; and therefore we may assure our selves he will do it, *he will not leave us, nor forsake us*; but he that gave us proofs of his Love, as great as God himself could contrive, when we were in a state of Enmity and Rebellion against him, will undoubtedly favour us now he has made us his own, Redeem'd us with his most precious Blood, entitl'd himself to our Service, nay, taken us into the place of Brethren and Friends.

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But a second reason why Christ's being in Heaven, and at the right hand of God, is so strong a Motive and Encouragement to draw our Endeavours that way, is, that he is our Mediator; for he has felt all the Infirmities of our Nature, and born the weight of all our Follies; and this enables him to solicit our Cause at another rate than the whole Angelick Host could do, who have only been lookers on: He knows, and never fails to represent to the Father, how weak, how frail we are, with what violence and impetuosity we are assaulted by Temptations, and how little strength we have to oppose against 'em. He knows how much our Reason is darken'd by our Passions; and is therefore ready to plead our Excuse, when we err and mistake. When through blindness we wander out of the Way, he is at hand to guide our Steps aright. He begs encrease of Grace for us, greater degrees of Light and Knowledge, and strength proportionable to the Difficulties we encounter; and whilst we keep our Faces towards *Sion*, though we may move slowly and heavily, and with many incumbrances about us, yet he will infallibly take care that we shall advance in our Progress, that every step we make shall be less tiresome than the other; and that at last we shall arrive safe at the Region of eternal Happiness.

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A third, and indeed the strongest Encouragement that of all others we can possibly conceive, to our Endeavours towards Heaven is, that all their Defects shall be supply'd by the infinite Merits of our Lord and Saviour. The Goodness of God is infinite, and his Mercy is over all his Works : but yet we should dread to approach him, and enter into his Presence full of diffidence and confusion, when we consider how constantly, how provokingly we offend him, and that *the imaginations of the thoughts of our Hearts are evil, and that continually as they come from our selves ;* but when we perceive that Christ himself comes in to our Relief, whose Merits infinitely outweigh our Offences, and that he graciously vouchsafes to place 'em all to our Account, we approach *the Throne of Grace* with a becoming Confidence, and not only know our selves safe from the Indignation and Vengeance of the Father which we had justly incurr'd ; but we take courage to plead for Favour and Reward in his Name, and shall in the end undoubtedly obtain it.

The fourth and last Encouragement to our Religious Endeavours is, that Christ shall be our Judge ; and this gives Life and Spirit to 'em : For he whose Compassion humbled him to the last degree for our sakes, he shall determine of our eternal Misery or Happiness. He who knows the Infirmities of our Nature, who takes the Will for the Deed,

Deed, and admits honest Endeavours in lieu of perfect Obedience ; nay, he who at all times succours and assists us, 'tis he alone has Authority to say how far he will accept us. In short, he who is our Redeemer, our Intercessor, our Brother, and our Friend. He who under all these Titles we may assure our selves will mitigate the rigour of Justice, and bring it down to the lowest pitch by his abundant Mercy and Indulgence, He shall be our Judge. A Judge that is only cloath'd with Justice is dreadful, and miserable Man, under the sense of his own Imperfections, and the Difficulties he must struggle with, would absolutely despair of eternal Life, and lay aside the thoughts of it as a fruitless pursuit, if he must expect the Reward from such a hand : but Mercy and Goodness keep his hopes alive ; Tenderness and Compassion give warmth and vigour to 'em ; and the wonderful amazing Proofs that Christ has given him of his Love, entirely dispel his Fears ; and turn his hopes into assurance, when he knows that his doom is to come from those gracious Lips.

I come now to the fourth thing I propos'd, which was, to instance in some means whereby we may arrive at our desired end ; and which are requisite to all such as sincerely *seek those things that are Above* ; and at present I shall only mention three ; *Contemplation, Prayer, and Charity.*

And

And *first*, I say, *Contemplation* is a proper means whereby we seek those things that are above: It is indeed the principal means whereby we seek the knowledge and discovery of 'em; but I speak now of the manner, of seeking so as to obtain 'em, for that is the import of the Word in the Text.

A Man is half cured of his Folly that can but be brought to a serious consideration of it, for the chief artifice of the World lies in amusing our Minds, and keeping them in an hurry with shift and variety of Trifles, and affording as little intermission as possible for reflection: And its no wonder, that People, fond in the pursuit of worldly Pleasures, are lazily content to be so dealt with; for it must be confess'd they will find something difficult and painful in serious thinking, not only as it is properly and truly a labour of the Mind, and requires close application and attention, but as it crosses the course of their Inclinations, by discovering their false Notions, confuting their weak Reasonings, reproving their absurd Practices, and calling them to a new, and, at first, unpleasant method of Thought and Action: For the change from one extrem to another; from this visible and carnal World, to the invisible and Spiritual; from these things below, to those that are above, will not be effected without some reluctancies in the beginnings, and often looking back upon the old acquaintance.

tance. But the more difficultly Men are brought to this, the more reason we have to press it importunately upon them, to beseech them in Christ's Name to be reconcil'd to God ; to think in time what they are doing, and whither they are going : And if they will not be brought to this, they not only offend against the light of the Gospel, but degrade themselves below the reasonable Nature ; for with what face can they pretend to so noble a Principle as an immortal Soul, that resolve to be ignorant of its proper business, and wherein the Dignity of its Nature consists. And if they will once seriously set themselves to learn this, they *will not be far from the Kingdom of God* : They will then begin to perceive what are, and what are not Objects worthy of their Consideration ; the Face of God will shine upon 'em, and as the Soul makes higher flights, the contemptible World will dwindle and vanish : New Scenes will open and disclose themselves, and they will quickly come to be experimentally convinc'd, that an habit of thinking in this Life, is previously requisite to a Life of Contemplation hereafter.

A second means whereby we seek those things that are above is *Prayer*. This is indeed in some measure an anticipation of the future Life, and entering into possession of Celestial Joys ; for by this we make the nearest approach to, and are admitted

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into Conversation with God himself. *Contemplation* only gives us, (if I may be allow'd to express it so) the prospect of Him at a distance, it seems to set him before us, rather as an object of the Understanding than the Affection ; but *Prayer* brings him close to us, gives us a full and distinct view of his infinite Perfections ; enables us to discover every day more and more how adorable, how amiable He is ; *we taste and feel*, as the Psalmist expresses it, *that the Lord is good* : That He only is good, and from experience we come to find, that nothing can give a true, substantial, lasting Pleasure, but the enjoyment of him. By this means we secure to our selves the concurrence and co-operation of his Grace, and in the most effectual manner prevent the danger of ever being surpriz'd or overcome by a Temptation ; for then we are able to say with St. Paul, *We can do all things through Christ that strengthens us*. Then we shall be able to ask with confidence, as he did, *who shall separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord* ? What Obstacles, what Distresses, what Temptations, what Powers, are able to interpose betwixt Him and us ? None, none of these things can prevent that blessed Union, when God himself is pleas'd to favour it ; and that he certainly and undoubtedly does so oft as the Soul, in sense of her own weakness and impotence, has recourse to him for succour.

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Of all others, *Prayer* is the most likely means to purify our Hearts, and from hence we know is the source and spring of all our irregular Desires; if we could keep Temptations from entering here, they would be weak and insignificant of themselves, for they are empty, and cold, and lifeless in their own Nature; but if they can prevail to be taken notice of and observed, they have a false Beauty that sparkles in the Eyes, and a great many Arts of Insinuation to make their way to our Hearts; but he that frequently addresses to God, will not dare to give admission to them, for he knows they will endeavour to keep possession, he knows it will be very hard to get 'em out again; and tho' they may pretend to be modest, to be content with a little corner, to lie as it were out of the way, and promise never to shew themselves unseasonably, or to interfere with nobler Thoughts, yet this is but pretence; they will insensibly enlarge their Quarters, and be in great danger of engrossing the whole. Indeed they must have the whole, if they can prevail to keep a part, for God will never accept a Share; and therefore he that prays as he ought will quickly dismiss 'em; he will have so lively a sense of God's Presence, as will fill him with confusion, to present before him a blemish'd Devotion, and an Heart not entire.

The third means whereby we seek those things that are Above is *Charity*, or *Love*, This is that immortal Virtue that shall outlive all the rest, that shall accompany us to Heaven, and there become the business of the place ; and therefore 'tis no wonder if it be made absolutely requisite here to all that will maintain a Title to that future Inheritance.

The word *Charity* in Scripture does often comprehend our whole Duty to our Neighbour ; but strictly speaking, it is that Affection of the Mind, whereby we are kindly dispos'd towards all Men, and ready to supply them as their Occasions may require, and our Abilities permit, with such things as of common right they could not demand. And this Affection alone is *Charity*, and acceptable to God, when nothing more is in our Power ; we are really Charitable when we wish well to those whom we cannot assist, and pray to God to be their Benefactor : But if we indeed have this Virtue, it will demonstrate it self in Actions as oft as it can ; for good Offices flow from it necessarily, as Effects from their Causes ; and where-ever any Man forbears to do good to another, when it is in his Power, we may infallibly be assur'd, he wants the Principle from whence it should spring. And that no Man may deceive himself, and think he has *Charity* when he has not, 'tis always easie for him.

him to examin his own Heart, and the Truth will manifestly discover it self. Let him ask whether he sincerely wishes well to all Men, whether he heartily rejoyces in their Welfare, whether he contributes to it as often as he has Opportunity and Ability, whether he does it to their Minds, as well as their Bodies, with relation to the Future, as well as the present Life ; and if his Heart can honestly answer him in the Affirmative to these Questions, he is a Charitable, a truly Charitable Man, and will reap the Fruits of that Admirable Vertue, both here and hereafter. 'Tis by this alone that we can demonstrate our love to God, and without it he will accept of no other Testimony ; for as St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, *if I give my Body to be burnt, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing.* This sounds something strange ; for our Blessed Lord, the great Example and Author of Love, has told us, *that greater Love hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friend,* and what can I do to gain Belief, if it be not sufficient to seal the Truth with my Blood ? Why St. John tells you in a very short word, Love your Brother, this and nothing else without it, is evidence in the case ; for *he that says he loves God, and hates his Brother, is a Lyar.* A Man may be a Martyr to his Pride or his Humour, and something of this kind St. Paul supposes in the present instance ; he had bin bred amongst the
Pharisees,

Pharisees, the greatest pretenders in the World, and he had seen pretences of Sanctity and Zeal, carry Men a great way where true Religion was not at the bottom; many times to the hazard, and sometimes even to the giving up of their Lives. But let 'em be carried as far as they would, they were not actuated by the love of God, if it did not appear in their love to Mankind. Let us therefore my Brethren, manifest our Love to God, by our Love to *his Offspring*; we are Members one of another, and ought, nay indeed, can scarce forbear, to have a *fellow feeling of each others Infirmities*; wherever therefore we discern a Mans Wants in any kind, let us relieve him, or rather let us relieve our selves, for if we have Humanity, we must be toucht with them: *Freely we have Receiv'd, let us freely Give*, 'tis applicable to Temporal, as well as Spiritual Goods. God has honour'd the Rich in this World, with the Title of his Stewards; but if they do not dispense what he has entrusted 'em with according to his Intention, they are false and unfaithful: The Office is Ministerial, the Goods are not their own, and they must be accounted for.

Charity is a word of a large Extent, and as we seldom see any Body that is entirely destitute of it in all its Parts, so we rarely find a Man that practices the several parts of it with an equal Tenour. Some are very free of their Advice and Instruction,
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have great Compassion upon Ignorance and Folly ; and we must own, it is a noble Charity to relieve 'em ; but these Men can look upon the bodily Wants of their Neighbours with less Tenderness, and give us too much cause to suspect, that they are liberal in the other Kind, because it costs 'em nothing. On the other side, 'tis no uncommon thing to see People free of their Purse, *ready to Distribute, and willing to Communicate*, where Misery and Distress call for their Aid, and this too, must be allowed to be Generous and Praise-worthy ; but if we perceive 'em at the same time to be unconcern'd for their Spiritual and Intellectual Wants, 'tis a manifest Indication that the Virtue is Complexional, we cannot chuse but reflect, that this is more likely to spring from Vanity, Ostentation, or a natural Tenderness of Mind, than from the Divine and reasonable Principle of Charity, which according to their Nature, has a sutable regard to Exigencies of all kinds.

And here I cannot forbear to observe, to the immortal Honour of this City and her Magistrates, that Charity in its true Latitude, seems to have bin cultivated by her with as much Application, as by any other Society whatsoever. Piety and Vertue have always shar'd in her Care, and in spite of the Degeneracy of the present Age, she has carried on her endeavours for Reformation of Manners.

ners seriously, and in some measure Successfully : God of his Mercy strengthen the Hands of all those that take Pains in so good a Work, and grant that they may every day get Ground, and See and Rejoyce in the Fruit of their Labours.

The Munificence and Liberality of the City, is seen in her publick Foundations and Hospitals, and here Provision is made for the Mind, as well as the Body, the Intention of the Benefactors is honourably pursu'd in the Execution, and the Care of the Governors is a Charity, not much inferior to the bounty of the Donors.

Christs Hospital alone, has this year given reception to above 400 Children, who are not only provided with all things Necessary, and instructed in Religious and Virtuous Principles; but are dispos'd of to Trades, and useful Employments, whereby they are put into a capacity of subsisting Comfortably and Independently, and being serviceable hereafter to the Publick themselves. The Number of those that have thus bin sent Abroad, is 69.

From *St. Bartholomew's Hospital* this year, 2197. Sick and Wounded Soldiers and Seamen have bin Cur'd and Discharg'd. 131 have after much Expence bin buried, and 320 still remain there under Cure.

From

From *St. Thomas's Hospital*, have this year bin Cur'd and Discharg'd, of Sick and Wounded Soldiers and Seamen, 2474. 154 have bin buried, and 329 still remain under Cure.

The Hospital of *Bridewell*, has this year received 1212 of Vagrants and other miserable People, and bred up 110 in divers Arts and Trades.

The Hospital of *Bethlem* has this year received 96 Distracted Persons, Cur'd 58. Buried 19, and has yet under Cure 137.

These are Noble and Useful Charities, such as will always keep fresh the Memory of the dead Benefactors. And the prudent Management whereof, will not fail to recommend to our Esteem, the Care and Piety of the Living. And what yet gives us a fuller *Idea* of the generous and publick Spirit that reigns here, is, that the Endowments and Revenues of these Places, fall extreamly short of their constant Expences. Fires and other Accidents have less'n'd their Incomes; but they still take care not to lessen the Charities. The Governors frequently supply from their own Pockets, what is wanting in the Rents; and when the Charge

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rises upon them, they think it more Creditable to contract Debts, than draw themselves within a narrower Compass. And may it please God, to move the Hearts of good and generous Men, to turn their Bounty this way, that these places which trust to, and depend upon such Accessions, may never feel Inconvenience from their Faith; nor be brought to the necessity of setting Limits to their Piety.

I must not forget another publick Charity of admirable Use, and which for that reason deserves the utmost Encouragement; I mean the Work-houses erected for employing poor Children, and such distressed Vagrant Children, as are found within the City, and the Liberties thereof. This by the Industry of the Presidents, and Governors for the poor of the City has bin carried so far, that 26 . Children of several Parishes, remain'd in the Workhouse this year, and 71, have since bin receiv'd. Of Vagrants there remain'd 71, and 89 have since bin taken in. These all according to their Ages and Conditions are Clothed, and Fed, and instructed in the Principles of Religion, and in honest Arts and Trades: They are inured to Labour, kept cleanly, and dispos'd to honesty by Encouragements and Discipline. I have not time to say,
of

of what wonderful Benefit these places are, and may be to the Publick, if we can happily fall into the right Management of them. Where the refuse of Mankind, they that would otherwise be the Bane and Scandal of the Commonwealth, are rescu'd from Perdition, and made useful Members of it. But it is hardly possible for Men to be better employ'd, than in this Work, or to be more Charitable than in their Contributions towards it. And may it please Almighty God, to enable those that undertake it, to surmount all the Difficulties that cross their Design. They will then have (what one would wish, to every good and publick spirited Man) the comfort of their Labours in this Life; and when that is at an end, those Labours will conduct 'em to *the Joys that are Above*, and that will for ever remain.

F I N I S.

of what wonderful benefits these places are and
 may be to the people if we can happily fall
 into the hands of the Master of the house. Where the
 spirit of the Lord is, they that would otherwise
 be the slaves and servants of the Commonwealth
 are set at liberty from bondage, and in a little time
 they are made free. It is hardly possible for Man
 to be so happy, as they are in this World, as
 to be so happy as they are in their Condition
 now. And may it please Almighty
 God, to make those that undertake it to be
 successful in their Endeavours that ends their
 fight. They will then have (what one would
 wish to every good and pious (spiritual Man)
 the comfort of their Labour in this Life; and
 when that is at an end, those Labours will con-
 duct them to the joy that is above, and that will
 be ever remaining.

6 JU 65

Labour

